

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 CU-04

OPR-02 OMB-01 NIC-01 IO-12 AID-20 RSR-01 /125 W

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R 132245 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4041

INFO USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 1633

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, SCUL, PINT, SDCI, MILI, UNDP, UNESCO

SUBJ: GOVT BACKTRACKS IN EDUCATION REFORM

REF: A) SANTIAGO 1412, B) MSGIR 6817 005473, C) SANTIAGO DATT 0054

DTG 131930 Z APR 73

1. SUMMARY. GOVT APPARENTLY BACKTRACKING IN PLAN TO IMPLEMENT EDUCATIONAL REFORM PROGRAM IN FACE STRONG CRITICISM FROM CHURCH, ARMED FORCES AND POLITICAL OPPOSITION. END SUMMARY.

2. MINED JORGE TAPIA TOLD SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE APR 12 THAT GOVT WOULD NOT INSTITUTE NEW UNIFIED NATIONAL SCHOOL (ENU) PLAN (REF A) THIS YEAR TO ALLOW FOR FURTHER NATIONAL DEBATE. JUNE 1 HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED AS INITIATION DATE. TAPIA MADE SIMILAR STATEMENT IN LETTER TO CARDINAL SILVA IN RESPONSE TO CHILEAN BISHOPS' DECLARATION WHICH HAD OPPOSED PLAN. TAPIA, NEVERTHE- LESS, HELD TO GOC POSITION THAT CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL OF PLAN NOT NECESSARY AND THAT IT WILL BE INSTITUTED AT APPROPRIATE TIME BY EXECUTIVE ORDER.

3. IN APR 12 CONVERSATION WITH PRESS TAPIA HERALDED TODAY' S PUBLICATION IN DIARIO OFICIAL OF " DECREE OF DEMOCRATIZATION OF EDUCATION" WHICH HAD BEEN PREVIOUS TOPIC OF POLITICAL CONTENTION (REF A). TAPIA EXPRESSED DISSATISFACTION WITH BY COMPTROLLER GENERAL' S OFFICE REVISIONS WHICH LIMITED
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POWERS OF ENVISIONED NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEES TO ADVISORY STATUS. PERHAPS TO SOOTHE SPIRITS OF MORE RADICAL MEMBERS HIS LARGELY SOCIALIST MINISTRY SMARTING UNDER ENU PULLBACK, TAPIA PROMISED TO FIGHT FOR LAWS WHICH WOULD GIVE NEW BOARDS SUPERVISORY AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS AS WELL.

4. POLICE USED WATER CANNONS TO BREAK UP STREET DEMONSTRATIONS OF STRIKING VALPARAISO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS APR 12. OPPOSITION- LED SANTIAGO SECONDARY SCHOOL FEDERATION (FESES) CALLED ONE- DAY STRIKE FOR APRIL 13. STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED IN DOWNTOWN SANTIAGO MORNING APRIL 13. PDC NATIONAL COUNCIL ISSUED STATEMENT APR 12 ORDERING PARTY FAITHFUL TO REDOUBLE EFFORTS TO FIGHT ENU IN LOCAL LEVEL ORGANIZATIONS.

5. APPROXIMATELY TWO HUNDRED SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS INCLUDING SERVICE CHIEFS MET WITH MINED AND MINDEFENSE TOHA APR 11 TO LISTEN TO TAPIA EXPLAIN ENU AND ANSWER POINTED QUESTIONS REFLECTIVE OF MILITARY OFFICERS' FEAR THAT PLAN WILL LEAD TO MARXIST INDOCTRINATION OF NATION' S YOUTH. REPORTS OF MEETING WERE LEAKED TO PRESS. OPPOSITION DAILES LA SEGUNDA AND LA PRENSA HAVE HIGHLIGHTED EXCERPTS OF DOCUMENT PURPORTEDLY READ AT MEETING BY R/ ADM ISMAEL HUERTA (ERSTWHILE MINPUBLIC WORKS) WHICH SHARPLY CRITICIZED POLITICAL INTENT UNS. (SEE REF C FOR FOR FURTHER DETAILS.)

6. COMMENT. EMBASSY HAS RELIABLE INFORMATION THAT UNESCO TECHNICIANS ASSIGNED TO UNDP PROJECT CHI-29 HAVE BEEN HELPING MINISTRY ON THE ENU. TAPIA' S APPARENT BACKING- OFF MIGHT TAKE SOME WIND OUT OF THE SAILS OF OPPOSITION TO ENU. HOWEVER, ISSUE HAS BROUGHT STUDENTS INTO STREETS FOR FIRST TIME IN YOUNG SCHOOL YEAR AND MORE IMPORTANTLY HAS PUBLICLY REVEALED FISSURES BETWEEN OFFICER CORPS AND CHURCH ON ONE SIDE AND GOVT ON THE OTHER.
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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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